STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
COUNTY OF AVERY

The Avery County Board of Commissioners met in Regular Session on Monday, October 19, 2020 at 3:30 p.m. in the Commissioners Board Room, Avery County Administrative Complex, 175 Linville Street, Newland, NC.

Members Present: Martha Hicks, Chair; Tim Phillips, Vice-Chair; Dennis Aldridge; Blake Vance; Wood Hall Young, Jr.

Members Absent: None

Call to Order
Chair Hicks led prayer.
The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Public Comment
There were no public comments.

Review of Applicants
There were four applications for review for the Avery County Agricultural Advisory Committee; Anne Avery Foster; Larry Smith; Nick Boone; Michelle Eggers Garner. These will be considered for appointment at the next regular meeting.

Finance Officer Report – Ashley Ingwersen
Budget Amendment
The Avery County Sheriff’s Office requests a budget amendment to recognize a grant received from the Department of Public Safety in the amount of $49,377.59 for a domestic violence officer. The grant requires a 25% county match.

There was discussion regarding the budget amendment and whether the 25% county match was already included in the budget. The Finance Officer was instructed to call Sheriff Kevin Frye regarding this grant.

Motion by Blake Vance and second by Wood Hall Young, Jr. to table the budget amendment until further information can be obtained. Motion unanimously approved (5-0) Hicks—Aye; Phillips—Aye; Aldridge—Aye; Vance—Aye; Young—Aye.

Public Hearing Regarding 2020 Community Development Block Grant for the Coronavirus Program
Motion by Wood Hall Young, Jr. and second by Dennis Aldridge to go into a time of Public Hearing at 3:40 p.m. Motion unanimously approved (5-0) Hicks—Aye; Phillips—Aye; Aldridge—Aye; Vance—Aye; Young—Aye.
Kelly Coffey with the High Country Council of Government explained that the public hearing was to receive public comment regarding a Community Development Block Grant—Coronavirus Program. The state of North Carolina’s Department of Commerce has received a $27.5 million Community Development Block Grant specifically to help municipalities and counties prepare, prevent, or respond to the health and economic impacts of COVID-19. Beginning September 1, 2020, the Department of Commerce will award CDBG-CV funds on a first come, first served basis to local governments who propose projects that will benefit low income individuals. A wide variety of projects are eligible but they must address problems caused by the virus. Project must meet community development needs that are deemed to be urgent because of existing conditions that pose a serious and immediate threat to the health and welfare of the community. Examples of projects include subsistence payments to prevent evictions and utility disconnections, food distributions, testing and diagnosis, employment training for health care workers, enhancing internet access that supports increased connectivity to schools, jobs, and healthcare, support for businesses that manufacture medical supplies, help for small businesses impacted by COVID-19 to create and retain jobs, and after school support for children affected by shorter school hours.

The maximum grant amount is $900,000; no matching funds are required but if the county will match this will improve the chance of being funded. During the planning process, the county manager will work closely with the Council of Government in the planning process. If awarded, the county must comply with federal procurement standards, develop a fair housing plan, develop a language access plan, have an environmental review and if hiring workers for a project make an effort to hire low income workers.

Wood Hall Young, Jr. questioned what the percentage was for the COG to do the administrative portion of the grant. Mr. Coffey stated it was 10%.

Phillip Barrier, Jr., County Manager, stated that the grant may be used for food distribution and possibly some type of after school for children.

Mr. Coffey stated that if the grant was awarded the county would have 30 months to spend the money.

There was no further public comments.

Motion by Dennis Aldridge and second by Wood Hall Young, Jr. to close the Public Hearing at 3:52 p.m. Motion unanimously approved (5-0) Hicks—Aye; Phillips—Aye; Aldridge—Aye; Vance—Aye; Young—Aye.

Agenda Consent Items
Adopted by Consensus of the Board.
Public Hearing Regarding FY2022 Community Transportation Program Grant Application

Motion by Blake Vance and second by Tim Phillips to go out of Regular Session and into a time of Public Hearing at 4:00 p.m. Motion unanimously approved (5-0) Hicks—Aye; Phillips---Aye; Aldridge---Aye; Vance---Aye; Young---Aye.

Debbie Smith, Director of Avery County Transportation, explained that this public hearing was to receive public comment on the proposed FY2022 Community Transportation Program Application. The Community Transportation Program provides assistance to coordinate existing transportation programs operating in Avery County as well as provides transportation options and services for the communities within this service area. These services are currently provided using Avery County Transportation vans including 4 mini vans, 3 conversion vans, 4 lift vans and one ramp van. The total funding request is $206,167.00 with a local share of $41,234.00. This is broken down as $156,684.00 with a local share of $31,337 for administrative and $49,483.00 with a local share of $9,897.00 for capital.

Ms. Smith stated that there were Title VI documents for anyone to fill out.

There was no public comment.

Motion by Tim Phillips and second by Blake Vance to go out of the Public Hearing at 4:08 p.m. Motion unanimously approved (5-0) Hicks—Aye; Phillips---Aye; Aldridge---Aye; Vance---Aye; Young---Aye.

Motion by Wood Hall Young, Jr. and second by Blake Vance to adopt the Resolution regarding the Community Transportation Program and to approve the grant application along with the local match. Motion unanimously approved (5-0) Hicks—Aye; Phillips---Aye; Aldridge---Aye; Vance---Aye; Young---Aye.

Mayland Community College FY 20/21 Budget—Dr. John Boyd
Dr. John Boyd stated that every year we must have the budget allowance signed off by each Board of Commissioners. It is basically signing off on the budget you have already passed. The amount is $367,783.00 for operating and $20,000 for capital for a total of $387,783.00.

Motion by Wood Hall Young, Jr. and second by Tim Phillips to approve the budget for Mayland Community College FY20/21 and authorize the chair to sign. Motion unanimously approved (5-0) Hicks—Aye; Phillips---Aye; Aldridge---Aye; Vance---Aye; Young---Aye.

Dr. Boyd updated the Board regarding Mayland Community College.
**Budget Amendment**

Motion by Blake Vance and second by Wood Hall Young, Jr. to reconsider the Budget Amendment that was tabled earlier in the meeting. Motion unanimously approved (5-0) Hicks—Aye; Phillips---Aye; Aldridge---Aye; Vance---Aye; Young---Aye.

The Avery County Sheriff’s Office requests a budget amendment to recognize a grant received from the Department of Public Safety for a domestic violence officer. The grant requires a 25% County Match.

Motion by Blake Vance and second by Tim Phillips to adopt the Budget Amendment regarding a grant received for the Sheriff’s Office with a debit of $47,890.40 to Grant Salary (105100.0240); debit of $3,663.00 to FICA (105100.0500); debit of $2,683.80 to Retirement (105100.0600); debit of $2,236.50 to 401K (105100.0800); debit of $7,484.40 to Group Insurance (105100.0700); debit of $443.70 to Cell Phones (105100.1360); debit of $300.00 to Training (105100.1000); debit of $1,135.00 to Travel (105100.1400) and a credit of $65,836.80 to Governor’s Crime Control Grant (103615.0000). Motion unanimously approved (5-0) Hicks—Aye; Phillips---Aye; Aldridge---Aye; Vance---Aye; Young---Aye.

**Recess**

Chair Hicks called for a brief recess.

Chair Hicks declared the meeting to be back in session after a brief recess.

**Public Hearing Regarding Expenditure of Funds for Economic Development Committee**

Motion by Wood Hall Young, Jr. and second by Dennis Aldridge to go into a time of public hearing at 4:30 p.m. Motion unanimously approved with those in attendance (Tim Phillips and Blake Vance were out of the board room) (3-0) Hicks—Aye; Aldridge---Aye; Young---Aye.

Phillip Barrier, Jr., County Manager, stated that this was a public hearing to receive public comment regarding expenditure of funds for the Avery County Economic Development Committee. Included in these expenditures are training and meeting expenditures not to exceed $550; travel expenditures not to exceed $500; advertising with the Chamber of Commerce and others not to exceed $1,000; funding for Economic Development projects not to exceed $1,000 and funding for upgrades for the Economic Development webpage not to exceed $4,000. Mr. Barrier stated that none of these expenditures would be spent until they are brought before the Board.

Clayton Harpold, Economic Development committee member, stated that the $4,000 for the IT maintenance contract is to enhance the IT and the public view on social media.
Tim Phillips stated that he had not been able to attend the committee meetings this year due to some health issues but that he thought they were doing a good job and that the Board needed to support the committee.

**Motion by Dennis Aldridge and second by Tim Phillips to go out of the Public Hearing at 4:35 p.m.** Motion unanimously approved (5-0) Hicks—Aye; Phillips---Aye; Aldridge---Aye; Vance---Aye; Young---Aye.

**Closed Session**

**Motion by Martha Hicks and second by Blake Vance to go into Closed Session at 4:37 p.m. regarding Attorney/Client Privilege NCGS 143-318.11 (a) (3).** Motion unanimously approved (5-0) Hicks—Aye; Phillips---Aye; Aldridge---Aye; Vance---Aye; Young---Aye. Invitees are the Board, Attorney, County Manager, Clerk and Finance Officer.

Chair Hicks declared the meeting to be back in Regular Session after a time of Closed Session. During Closed Session, no vote was taken.

Dennis Aldridge left the meeting at 4:57 p.m. to attend another meeting.

**Motion by Tim Phillips and second by Wood Hall Young, Jr. to authorize the Department of Social Services to pursue settlement of their pending employment claim up to $65,000.** Motion unanimously approved with those in attendance (4-0) Hicks—Aye; Phillips---Aye; Vance---Aye; Young---Aye.

In the event it is settled, that matter will come before the Board of Commissioners again.

**Adjourn**

**Motion by Tim Phillips and second by Blake Vance to adjourn this meeting at 5:14 p.m.** Motion unanimously approved with those in attendance (4-0) Hicks—Aye; Phillips---Aye; Vance---Aye; Young---Aye.

__________________________________
Martha Hicks, Chair  
Avery County Board of Commissioners

ATTEST:__________________________________
Cindy Turbyfill, Clerk